

battle against his pursuers. The latter
 constructed
 a new bridge, and an attack of the
 royal forces
 failed to prevent their crossing the
 river and
 drawing up in line for battle on the
 plain between
 Nocera and the Sarno. The day was
 the 24th
 July, 1132. The Prince of Capua's troops
 were ar-
 ranged with their backs to the bridge, a
 dangerous
 way of retreat if the day went against
 them. His
 own force counted at least one
 thousand knights
 divided into squadrons in front and
 rear; perhaps
 a larger number were under the
 command of his
 lieutenant Rainulf. The latter,
 stationed on the
 right wing, formed his troops into three
 divisions,
 having a centre and wings; the latter
 being in-
 tended as reserves (*custodies*). Of his
 knights he
 despatched two hundred and fifty to
 raise the
 siege of the castle and divert part of
 Roger's force.
 The King's army was ranged in eight
 successive
 divisions, some of these forming a
 reserve.

The action was begun by the
 royalists. Their
 first line, with their lances thrown
 away, their
 swords drawn, and their horses
 spurred to the full
 charge, rode irresistibly in on the
 Prince's leading
 squadron and routed it at once. At the
 sight of
 this the infantry, who had been

stationed as a
support behind the cavalry of the
vanguard,
turned and fled to the river. The bridge
was not
sufficient for the flying; a thousand
perished in the
water, the majority escaped over the
broad plain
to left and right of the battle. The
second line,
all cavalry, of the Capuans, which had
opened its